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RUMANIAN SNOWSTORM EMERGENCY, SPRING AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY

[Comment: In 1953, preparation for spring planting in Rumania began, by official decree, toward the end of February (see 00-W-26724). In 1954, however, Bucharest newspapers stated that planting would be considerably delayed as a result of snowstorms in February, and that the planting season would be much shorter than usual. The first news of heavy snowfalls and blizzards in Rumania was given by the newspaper Munca on 5 February 1954. A state of emergency was called during February. All citizens were asked to protect animals and poultry and to volunteer for snow clearance, since roads and railroads were blocked. Snow clearance continued during early March. Only sporadic instances of spring planting were reported.

No mention was made in Rumanian newspapers during January, February, and the first half of March 1954 of the condition of winter crops. No indication was given in late February or during the first half of March that the severe blizzards and unusual cold weather prevailing during all of February and part of March had damaged or even affected these crops.

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.]

Storm Emergency

The Central Council of Trade Unions urges all able men and women to respond wholeheartedly to the plea of the government to clear the roads and highways of snow and help restore communications, so that the urban population may be kept supplied with food. The Central Committee of the Union of Working Youth joins in the appeal. It also urges young men and women in the country and on farms to tend to animals and poultry, and to protect them from the cold.

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Practically all of Rumania is blanketed by heavy snow and it is colder than it has been in many years. This could cause heavy losses to animal life. To prevent such losses, state farms, collectives, and individual peasants, guided and assisted by their respective people's councils, are urged to take immediate measures to shelter animals and to keep them well fed. The rural population is also urged to provide caretakers at livestock farms with warm clothes and sufficient food. Government agents and citizens are urged to do their utmost to clear the roads and to carry food and fodder wherever needed. Peasants are warned against attacks by wild beasts which are roaming the villages, and are advised to set up watch teams at livestock farms.

Dozens of workers at electrical plants and waterworks have not left their jobs for days, but are remaining to help cope with the situation. The army is performing valiant acts in helping those places where the situation is most difficult. Citizens, even using children's sleighs, are helping to carry food from distribution centers. Telephone and telegraph operators are working hard to maintain services. Doctors and nurses are staying at their posts day and night. In the country, peasants are fighting storms and blizzards to take care of their livestock.

Heavy snowfalls have been reported in Bacau Regiune. Workers and city dwellers are helping to clear the snow, so that food supplies can reach the population. Young peasants in Bacau Raion are fighting the blizzard to clear roads to the woods, so that firewood can be transported to neighboring cities.(1)

More than 140,000 people in Bucharest City volunteered to clear the snow on 7 February. Workers in factories and bakeries remained at their jobs on Sunday, 7 February, to supply the capital with food. Bucharest Regiune mobilized 230,000 people to clear the snow.(2)

In Constanta Regiune, 2 days of intensive snowfall and blizzards have given way to calmer weather. Workers and intellectuals have responded to the call of the government to help clear the snow. The city of Constanta has made available 30 sleighs to bring in food for the population. All six raions in the regiune have set up command centers to supervise the clearing of snow. Peasants of Independenta and Cobadin communes braved the storm to clear roads leading to sheep flocks and to transport fodder for the animals.(1)

Thousands of citizens in Craiova Regiune responded to the government's call to clear the heavy snow. On 3 February, 25,000 people were mobilized to clear snow. The regiune sent out 347 ox-drawn plows and 51 tractor snowplows to help in the clearing work. The situation remains critical.(3)

In Galati Regiune, the weather conditions have improved after 3 days of blizzards and heavy snowfalls. Most of the regiune, including railroads and highways, is snowbound. Bulldozers and plows are working in the streets of Galati and Braila to clear the snow. Locomotives with snowplows are clearing the tracks, but only 20 kilometers were cleared by 4 February on the Galati-Barlad line.(1)

The Hungarian Autonomous Regiune reported heavy snowfalls at the beginning of February. As a result of the immediate action taken by the regiune, raion, and commune people's councils on 3 and 4 February 1954, approximately 559 kilometers of road and some railroad trunk lines have been cleared. More than 10,000 people were mobilized to clear the snow.(3)

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Workers and intellectuals in Ploesti Regiune readily responded to the government's call in the emergency created by the heavy snowfalls. Thousands of workers and youths have helped clear the snow. The Ploesti Regiune People's Council has taken emergency measures to keep the urban population supplied with food. Health stations have been organized to give the necessary medical aid.(1) Workers in bakeries and food plants have worked by day and carried supplies by night into the various snowbound sections of the regiune. Men, women, old people, and children have helped to clear the snow.(4)

The Rumanian government has received eight snowplows from the Soviet Union to help restore normal railroad communications throughout the country. The equipment was accompanied by Soviet railroad employees. The Ploesti-Bucharest, Bucharest-Rosiori-de-Vede, and Ploesti-Targoviste lines are partly cleared [12 February 1954].(5)

Civilian and army workers have succeeded in opening the Cluj, Craiova, Iasi, Stalin, and Timisoara regiune railroad lines [13 February]. The Bucharest-Stalin, Ploesti-Buzau, Faurei-Galati, Fetesti-Constanta, Tandarei-Lunca Prutului, Ciulnita-Calarasi, Tecuci-Barbosi, and Galati-Barlud trunk lines have been cleared.(6)

Thousands of people throughout Rumania have helped clear streets and highways to restore normal communications. In Bucharest City alone, 31,000 people worked with 398 trucks, carrying thousands of truckloads of snow on 12 February 1954. The work continued throughout the night.

In Craiova Regiune, 37,500 people worked on 12 February to clear 2,000 kilometers of highways and roads.

Thousands of men and women were mobilized in Constanta Regiune, clearing 263 kilometers of highways and roads on 12 February. Snow clearing also continued in Barlad, Galati, Pitesti, and Ploesti regiunes and in the Hungarian Autonomous Regiune.(7)

Heavy snowfalls started again a few days ago and blanketed the country, making transportation impossible [19 February]. The people again were called to clear roads and help reopen communications. The city of Bucharest started rationing water supplies.(8)

Many regiunes were hard hit by a second series of blizzards and snowfalls. More than 13,500 people worked in Craiova Regiune on 18 and 19 February to clear the roads and highways. They cleared only 39 kilometers of regiune highways, 206 kilometers of rayon highways, and 357 kilometers of commune roads. Snow clearing is also continuing in Constanta, Galati, and Ploesti regiunes.(9)

Oradea Regiune has reported heavy snowfalls [27 February]. A second heavy snowfall has covered Ploesti Regiune. Galati Regiune again is blanketed with heavy snow, and thousands of people have been mobilized to clear the snow.(10)

Constanta Regiune has reported heavy snows, and similar conditions are reported from Galati, Iasi, Pitesti, and other regiunes.(11)

#### Decision of Council of Ministers and Central Committee

[On 3 March 1954, all Bucharest newspapers carried the same long article on the importance of increasing agricultural production in 1954, and published the following decision of the Council of Ministers of the Rumanian People's Republic and the Central Committee of the Rumanian Workers Party, giving instructions for planting as rapidly as possible.]

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Because of the unusual quantity of snow which fell at the end of the winter, the 1954 spring agricultural campaign will be much shorter than usual. A special effort must be made, therefore, to ensure the completion of the spring campaign on time. This year can and must be a year of considerably increased production per hectare for all main plants, especially corn, potatoes, sugar beets, and sunflower. Draft animals, animal-drawn equipment, machines, and implements must be used to the maximum. Not even the smallest strip of land must remain barren, and proper agricultural rules must be observed to the greatest extent. Individual peasants must help each other by lending implements and animals, and by exchanging seeds. All agricultural and industrial forces which can contribute to the increase of agricultural production and all individual peasants must be mobilized to fight for a better harvest.

Party members and people's councils must prove their power of mobilizing the masses; they must apply their organizational ability and their skill in overcoming difficulties and in obtaining the best results.(12)

#### Beginning of Spring Planting

The Secera si Ciocanul Collective, Olari Commune, Cris Raion, Arad Regiune, started spring sowing on 5 March. The collective sowed 18 hectares of barley in one day. Individual farmers also started sowing. The Viata-Noua Collective, Santana Commune, Cris Raion, started work in the fields on 10 March. In one day, the collectivists seeded the planned 4.5 hectares of peas.(13)

Collectives in Baia-Mare Regiune started spring sowing early in March. The Minerul Collective, Caraseu Commune, Satu-Mare Raion, started sowing on 8 March. Collectivists harrowed winter crops and sowed 3 hectares of barley.

The Horia, Closca si Crisan Collective, Mediesul-Aurit Commune, started plowing and seeding with 40 animal-drawn plows. In one day, the collectivists plowed and harrowed 12 hectares, and sowed 9.5 hectares of oats.(14)

Collectivists and individual peasants in Cluj Regiune took advantage of good weather and started spring sowing early in March. The collectivists of Grabenisul-de-Campie Commune, Sarvas Raion, plowed the fields and sowed 12 hectares of spring wheat and 10 hectares of poppy seed.(13)

Favorable weather at the beginning of March permitted peasants to start work in the fields in Turda Raion, Cluj Regiune. The collective of Cacova-Ierii village started sowing on 10 March. The collectivists sowed 3 hectares of wheat. Collectivists of Ploscos Commune plowed 3 hectares. Individual peasants also started work in the fields. By 11 March, Iara Commune had plowed 10 hectares and harrowed 8 hectares of winter crops.(15)

Individual peasants in Hunedoara Raion, Hunedoara Regiune, started spring sowing on 12 March. They sowed barley and sunflower.

The Nicolesti-Ciba Collective, Hungarian Autonomous Regiune, started work in the fields on 9 March. The collectivists worked all day with 12 animal-drawn plows, plowing 18 hectares, harrowing 20 hectares, and seeding 8 hectares of sunflower.(13)

The Infratirea Collective, Batos Commune, Reghin Raion, Hungarian Autonomous Regiune, started spring sowing on 5 March. The Tudor Vladimirescu State Farm, Arad Regiune, started spring sowing early in March. By 9 March, the farm has seeded 35 hectares of peas.(16)

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Even though the snow has not yet thawed [by mid-March] in many villages of Iasi Regiune, some fields have become workable. Plowing has started at the Dobrovat State Farm, Codaesti Raion, and at the Brosteni State Farm. The tractor brigade of the latter completed 11 hectares of plowing in one day. Plowing has also started in other raions of Iasi Regiune. (17)

Individual peasants in Oradea Regiune started spring sowing early in March. The peasants sowed large areas of barley. (14)

Favorable weather at the beginning of March permitted collectivists in Sibiu Raion, Stalin Regiune, to start spring work in the fields. The 6 Martie Collective had sowed 7.5 hectares of barley and 3 hectares of sunflower by 10 March. The Viata-Noua Collective, Daia Village, has sowed 14 hectares of oats, and the Steaua-Rosie Collective, Slimnic Commune, has sowed 2 hectares of oats [by 12 March]. Individual peasants have also started sowing. (13)

The Bethausen MTS, Timisoara Regiune, started work in the fields in the first days of March. Six tractor brigades plowed and seeded at the collectives in Faget, Bichigi, and Cutina communes. (18)

Collectives, TOZ, and individual peasants in Timisoara Regiune took advantage of the fair weather at the beginning of March to start work in the fields. The Partizanii Pacii Collective, Pischia village, and the Dumbravita and Sanandrei collectives started plowing and seeding. The Flacara Collective seeded 9 hectares of peas and sowed 20 hectares of oats. (19)

## SOURCES

1. Munca, 5 Feb 54
2. Viata Capitalei, 9 Feb 54
3. Munca, 6 Feb 54
4. Ibid., 7 Feb 54
5. Ibid., 12 Feb 54
6. Ibid., 13 Feb 54
7. Ibid., 14 Feb 54
8. Ibid., 19 Feb 54
9. Ibid., 20 Feb 54
10. Scanteia, 27 Feb 54
11. Ibid., 28 Feb 54
12. Romania Libera, 3 Mar 54
13. Ibid., 12 Mar 54
14. Ibid., 10 Mar 54
15. Munca, 13 Mar 54

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16. Romania Libera, 9 Mar 54
17. Ibid., 14 Mar 54
18. Munca, 10 Mar 54
19. Romania Libera, 13 Mar 54

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